

# ICON



## DESIGNING WITH PURPOSE

how mindfulness  
drives better design

Lauren Dargo on designing for  
wellbeing/Home is where the  
heart is/Architects versus housing

ISSUE DJ41005  
WINTER 2021

# vitra.



The Original comes from Vitra

[www.vitra.com](http://www.vitra.com)



On the cover

Peter Barber Architects  
illustration of Grandville  
Garden's new social  
housing development

## Front

**3**  
EDITORS LETTER

**4**  
CONTRIBUTORS



## Design

**5**  
**HOME SWEET HOME**  
Elaine Simpson  
explores what  
makes a house a  
home?



## Architecture

**18**  
**Q&A: BY LAUREN  
DARGO**  
An exclusive interview  
with a master of  
people  
centred design

**30**  
**ARCHITECTS VERSUS  
HOUSING**  
A new chapter in the  
design of social  
housing helping  
integrate our  
communities. Can  
societal classes live in  
unison?

## Leader



**Elaine Simpson**  
Editor



**DESIGNING WITH A PURPOSE** sets out to focus on the importance of getting it right for every client. Fused with harmonious design dynamics and principles that in turn lead to the built environment in which we live exponentially enhancing our wellbeing in respect of mindset, healthset, soulset and heartset.

Contemplating and analysing on the diversities between a house and a home, Icon reflects as to why establishing in terms of their **meanings** the importance of the relationship we have with both. By looking at the formulas which lead to the success of making a space come alive, in order to invite and result in the formation of new relationships along the way, we need to ensure the physical and social aspects fit together.

By mending the unstable interactions that exist between people and spaces, designing with **mindfulness** has been proven to excitedly put right the past inaccuracies we have seen in our built communities, by mending the communication breakdown between designers and the people inhabiting the spaces, a noticeable new **people centred** design vision is awakening. ◆

# ICON

## EDITORIAL

**EDITOR**  
ELAINE SIMPSON

**Contributors**  
Lauren Dargo, Michael  
Laird Architects

**Content editor**  
Elaine Simpson

**Editor-in-Chief**  
Denise Milne

**WINTER**  
**ISSUE DJ41005**  
**PART 2**  
**(SEM 21/22)**

**elainesimpson.170017242**

## Contributors



**Lauren Dargo**, Interior Designer with leading design company, Michael Laird Architects, shares her passion and experience of designing with a purpose.



# HOME

# SWEET

# HOME

The home has never played such an important role in our lives as it has today. In response to the pandemic experienced by the world in which during our residences intense use, shortcomings have been unveiled. So, what makes a house a home?

By Elaine Simpson  
Photography by Do Ho Suh

# "A house is a machine for living in"



# H O M E

BELOW Rear of Glasgow tenement block, 1971



ABOVE Mother living with her children in her overcrowded single end tenement flat in Glasgow, 1971

FAR LEFT Le Corbusier at home in France



# S W E E T

**The home** has been the nucleus of life since the beginning of mankind providing shelter, safety, and a place to spend time with family and friends. Revolving in style, shape and materiality, the functionality of the home has never undergone such need for change as it has in the last few years as a result of the restrictions in movement and focus imposed upon the world due to the global pandemic, Covid 19.

Since 2019, the role of the home has undergone an enormous amount of critical observation and examination prompting the need to change on reflection of its needs to now become a multi-functional, non-circadian habitual abode for the occupier. Being re-purposed, the home commands the demand more than ever for its design to reflect its functional needs rather than one of aesthetics. Focusing on the needs of our homes, we explore how we can learn from

past design principles and as designers what needs to change to reflect the redefined modern functional home. 'A house is a machine for living in', the evocative words expressed by French-Swiss architect, Le Corbusier in 1927 when describing a home; a perfectly engineered tool for living, taken from his manifesto, *Vers Une Architecture* (Towards a New Architecture). Le Corbusier's design and vision of a home has carried on through to the twenty first century remaining as influential to this day with many of his design principles seen in our homes. Can these principles carry on in the future designs of the home or do we need to rethink these principles whilst being mindful of the new role the home has taken on since the introduction of the pandemic?

Icon begins by exploring the history of our homes and their purpose in this first article in a series looking at how mindfulness plays an important element in the design of the home.

The words 'Home' and 'House' although connotationally linked, have very different meanings. When we talk about a house, we talk about 'a building made for people or a family to live in' however, when we use the word 'home' we relate this to the experience of the family living in the house. Perhaps this is where the importance of the role of mindfulness plays a large part in the future planning of our 'home' rather than just focusing principally on the aesthetics of the 'house' design as seen in the past.

During her empirical literature review, 'The Meaning of Home?' assistant professor in Architecture at the Laval University in Quebec, Carole Deprese, investigates in great depth the need to consider the various personal and environmental aspects and restraints when alluding to what a home really is and its significant differences to a house. Taking into consideration the many factors involved which result in this conclusion, with the main important behavioural interpretations being;

providing physical security for the occupant, to accommodate the reflection of their values, to provide a space for relationship forming, supporter of work and leisure activities and a space for privacy and independence.

Basing her theories on available resources from 1974 to 1989, Deprese reflects on the meaning of home from a traditional family single-home perspective, leaving the need and importance to consider the more modern non-traditional family set up of the home in order to reflect a more realistic and current meaning.

Home, for people growing up in the 1970's in Scotland for most working-class families meant living in accommodation that was cramped, often referred to as 'slums', all of which falling far below today's tolerable living standards set out by the local government. An overcrowded, damp, tenement flat in Glasgow depicts the normal home life of the folk of this era and social class. ▶

Whilst the home's characteristics have remained pretty much the same, providing a roof over our head and a place for shelter and nurture, its properties have changed over the past few decades. The typical layout of the family home in 1970's consisted, on average, of 3 public rooms occasionally with shared sleeping arrangements for the family and may even have had outside toilet facilities compared to our oversized family homes as we know them today.

Despite statistical evidence that the family unit has in fact decreased in size from the ratio of 3.4 persons per household in 1970 to present day of 2.14 persons per household, our homes have continued to grow not necessarily as importantly in size, dependant on what area of the country you come from, but certainly in their usage and distribution.

In a study by Farrow, Taylor and Golding, on average, the hours per day spent at home based on the traditional home set-up, found that mothers spent 76.7%, fathers 61.3% and a child 80.4%, resulting in the home being a place where the different dimensions of a family spend most of their time. However, from this information, we can recognise the ways in which we use the home and how this physical environment, its design and functions, and the impacts on our relationship, remain important.

How we use our homes was predicted by Amos Rapoport whilst discussing in his theory behind the meaning of the built environment, 'it appears that people react to environments in terms of the meanings, the environments have for them'.

Disregarding the influences of some cultural, social and architectural factors upon the use and structure of our homes in the meantime, we look at how the home, that has become the central role in our everyday lives, and how they are put together.

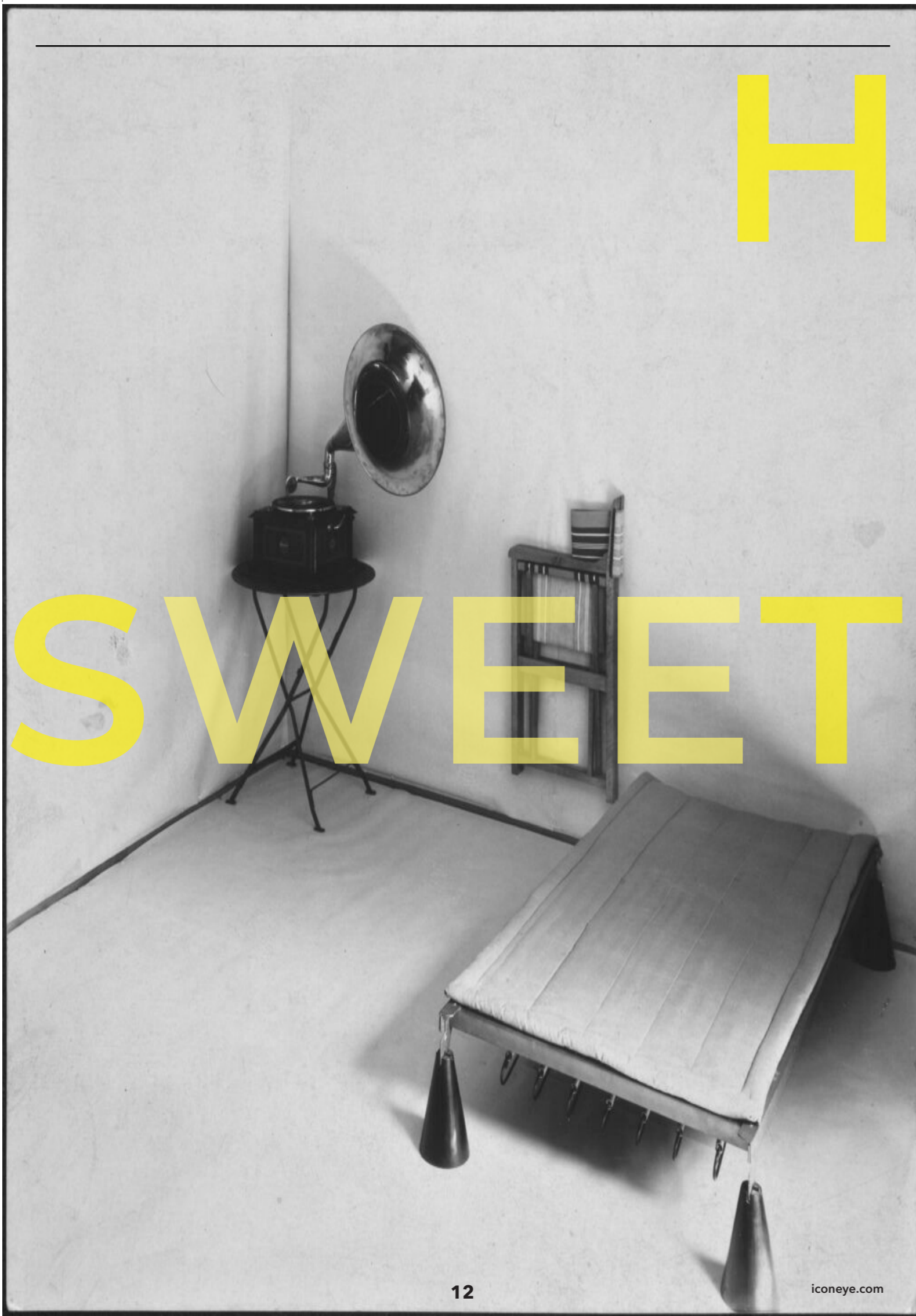
We have established that we use our homes for several different dimensions ranging from an expression of a place of centrality; continuity; privacy; self-expression and personal identity; to the formation and maintenance of social relationships.

Our homes are formed along the basic



**“It appears that people react to environments in terms of the meanings the environment have for them”**

**HOME**

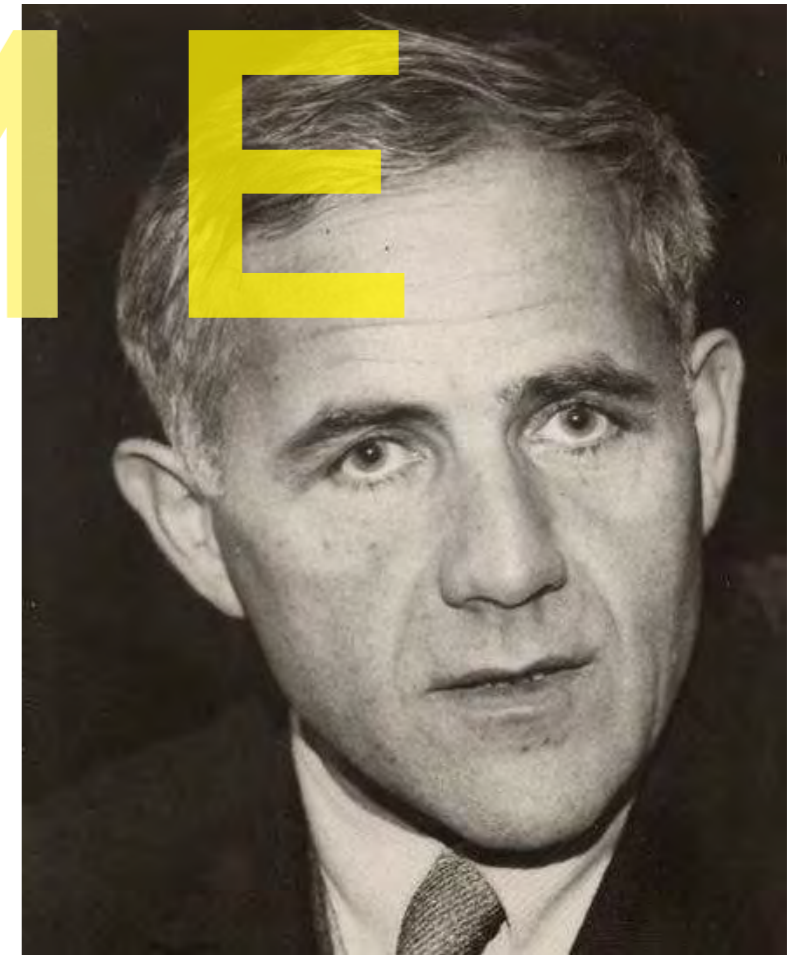


# HOME SWEET

# HOME

RIGHT Hannes Meyer

LEFT Hannes Meyers Co-op Interieur



principles that they aim to provide space for living and socialising in, eating, washing and sleeping. These areas we know and label more traditionally as the living room, kitchen perhaps including a dining area, bathroom and bedrooms. The modern-day house, however, takes these basic functionality areas further and in addition to those now support and include separate studying, exercising and creative areas within the home.

Illustrating a different approach to the idealistic domestic house structure and our need and yearning for more space, Hannes Meyer, Swiss architect and urbanist and former director in the Bauhaus in Dessau, demonstrates a different view of this principle, questioning its very need. Using reclaimed items of furniture and objects: in addition to collapsible fixtures and fittings; a bed, a gramophone resting on a table, a pair of chairs, one hanging on the wall, and a shelf unit supporting jars containing items, Meyer sets out to portray and critique a domestic space questioning the need for a large home over the minimal dwelling in which he illustrates in his staged room 'Co-Op Interieur'.

# HOME

**"co-operative architecture entails reorganising an organised form of existence. It alternates phases of organisation and of spontaneity by letting the collective subject implicitly co-operate with architecture and foster explicit co-operation among its individuals"**

H

O

M

E

SWEET

In deciphering as to what Meyer meant exactly by his principles behind the 'Co-op Interieur' Rosa Luxemburg, Polish philosopher, expresses her interpretation as 'co-operative architecture entails reorganising and organised forms of existence. It alternates phases of organisation and of spontaneity by letting the collective subject implicitly co-operate with architecture and foster explicit co-operation among its individuals.'

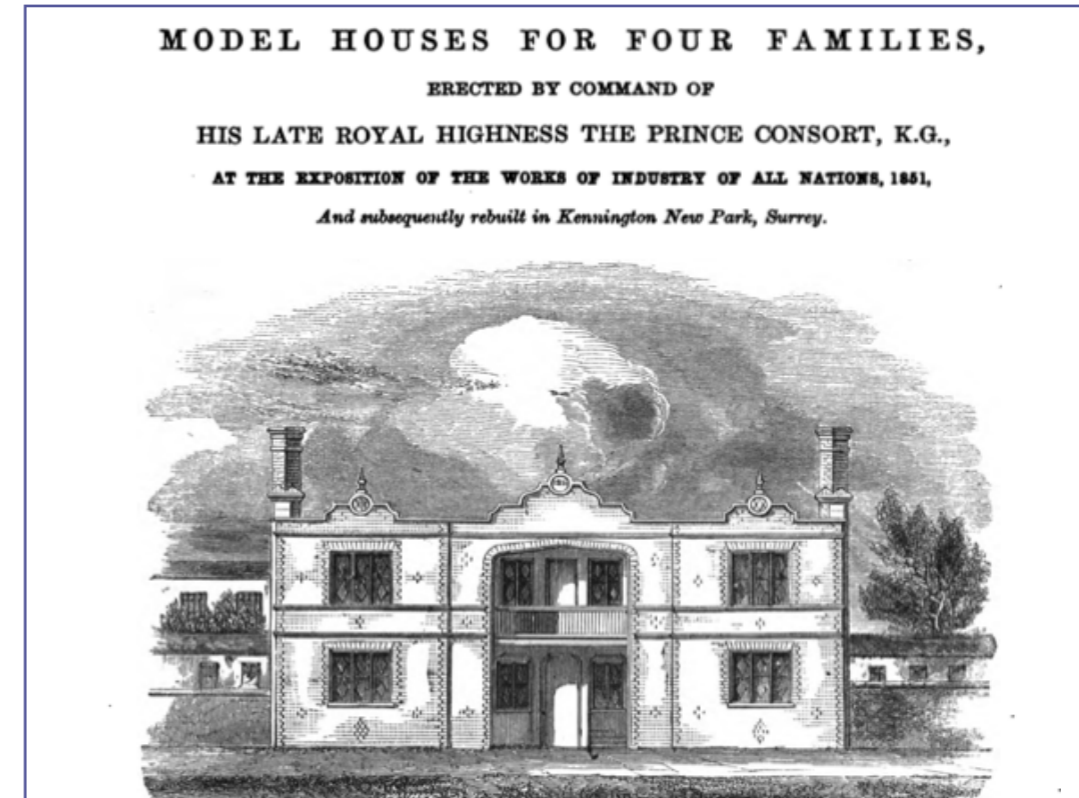
An example of this type of single room dwelling is practised by the hermetic monks whom in the search for solitudinal living found their home in the 'cell' derived from the Latin word 'cella', meaning small room.

Moving away from Meyer's proposition and visual perception that living can be simplified and confined to one room within the home, architect Henry Robert's in his 19<sup>th</sup> Century residential designs provides an earlier and very different approach on how the family home can

be divided to accommodate everyone's needs, with the formation of walls dividing the space up into several separate rooms with the view to homing up to four families in the one building.

Robert's design principles aimed at 'individuate' of each family member in the household providing areas for living, sleeping and eating reflected in the structure and layout of our homes today.

Relative to the 'single room' and 'cell' typographies debated earlier, authors, Gosling, Craik, Martin and Pryor introduce, analysis and evaluate the concept of personal living space (PLS) in their publication titled 'The Personal Living Space Cue Inventory'. Defining what they meant by a personal living space Gosling says, 'It is much more than a bedroom but less than a full-fledged house. A PLS is typically a room nestling within a larger residential setting while affording primary territory for a designated individual.'



ABOVE Henry Robert's Model House for families

Supporting the words spoken by Le Corbusier, 'houses are tools we use to live, and we happen to live inside them', his theory eludes that the 'home' forms an entire unit whilst a 'house' is broken up into several rooms, becomes clear. With the rooms receiving attributed labels they can have very different meanings alongside how they can be used in very different ways. ▶

**"houses are tools we use to live and we happen to live inside them"**

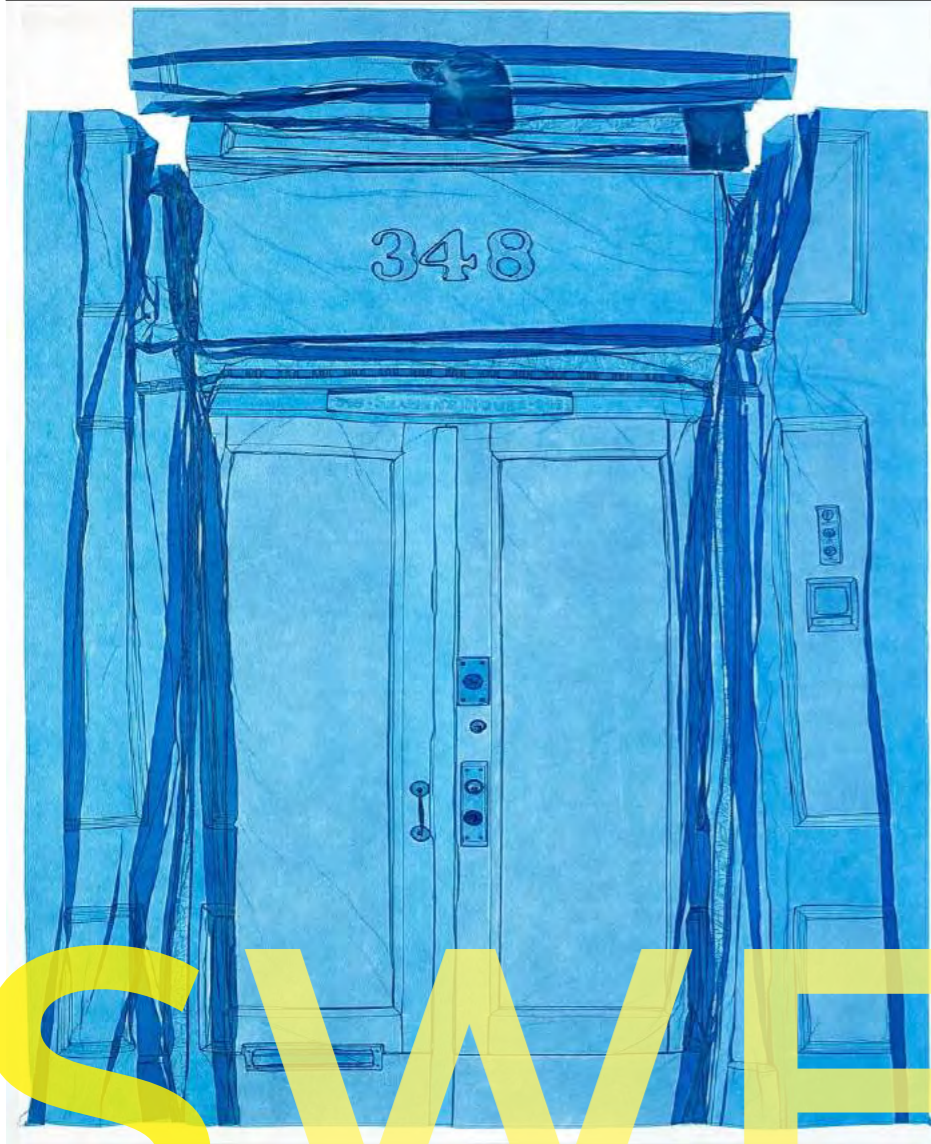
H

O

M

E





LEFT Do Ho Suh's sketch of front door of apartment block in Manhattan, New York

H



# SWEET

By understanding the history and principles involved in the past design of our residential dwellings and looking at the conceptual meaning of 'home', it is clear that although through using past learnt principles moving away from circular floor plans, involving the use of simple shapes, clean lines, open floor plans and comfortable furniture as discussed by Le Corbusier, and maintaining the concepts used by Meyer and argued by Roberts in relation to the layout and space usage of the home, they all have served their purpose.

However, there is still a large gap in the need and recognition for a more mindful design approach to be adapted between architects and designers, in consultation with families, in order to produce a habitation that meets all modern day needs especially in relation to the multi-tasking and the house evaluating as to how our homes are used. Most importantly, careful attention needs to be paid

**"Careful attention needs to be paid as to how the built environment manages our wellbeing"**

as to how the built environment manages our wellbeing working hand in hand with environmental psychology in response for the need for our homes to become multi-functional more than ever before.

Designed with care, the home has real potential to grow into a landmark of experimental relationship forming. ◆



**from the field to the workshop  
Design by Aymeric Renoud**

# Discourse

## Lauren Dargo

**"I love the customer journey;  
you think a lot about that  
aspect and their involvement  
within the space"**

Interview by Elaine Simpson



**A**nounced to the world in 1964 by William Ittelson, 'Environmental Psychology', the impact of the connected relationships between our physical spaces and how they make us feel, was once adopted somewhat reluctantly by architects and designers alike. Their reaction to the built environment was very much drawn from a perceptual perspective, whilst forgetting the combined effect on the actual user.

Such theory and definitions have since been drawn from Kurt Lewin's famous equation  $B=f(PE)$  in 1951, and the relationship between the two factors engaging with his belief 'Not only does the environment influence an individual but also the individual impacts on the environment.'

Today, we focus on the major role of the practises and principals involved in how people behave with and respond to their surroundings led from a design perspective. Providing designers with the knowledge and confidence, evidentially evolves into the design of not just aesthetically pleasing physical environments but the construction of social phenomenon's.

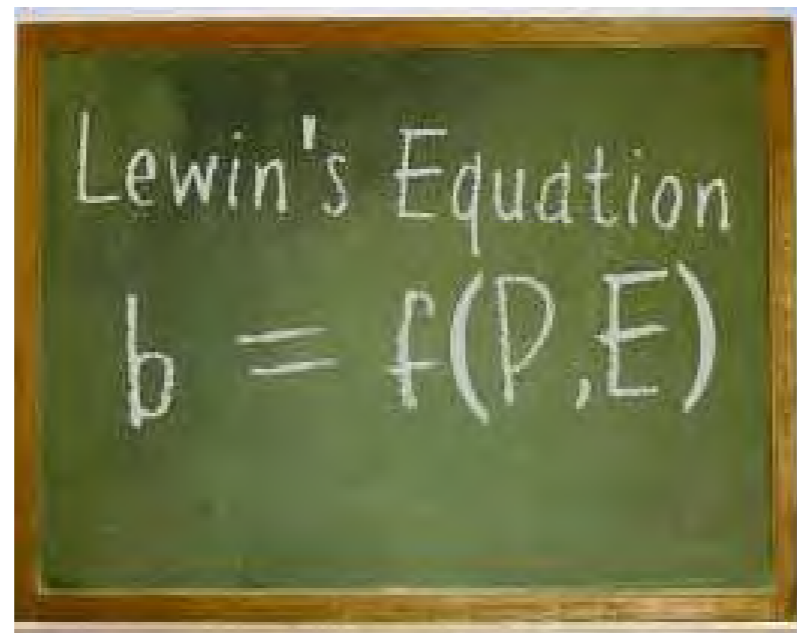
Icon met with Lauren Dargo as part of the 'Design with a Purpose' series to discuss her role in the connection between a space and how it makes us feel.

Like many creatives, Edinburgh based Lauren Dargo longingly aspires to

create meaningful spatial solutions for people to live and work in. By breathing life into new and re-used environments, Dargo inspires a positive collaborative harmony between our minds and the space, her driving force behind promoting and enhancing a user's experience along the way.

Today we follow her on her journey into user centred design and as to why she thinks design has the potential to shape human behaviour making this way of thinking to become Lauren's passion and ultimate drive in her design vision. ▶

**BELOW** Kurt Lewin's (1951) famous environmental psychology equation where B is behaviour, P is the person and E is the environment. The equation relates to behaviour being a function of the person, the environment, and the interaction between the two.



**"Not only does the environment influence an individual but also the individual impacts on the environment"**



**ABOVE** Site visit providing an insight into the scale and size of the space and how the design proposal may work with the surrounding area

'**ONE OF THE** best ways to test a project', says Lauren Dargo, 'is to imagine you are the user'. Dargo is referring to the process of 'people-focused, design-led' ethics which has led to her being part of a success story in the world of harmoniously led environmental psychology in her field of design. By passionately driving the importance of the user experience as being the most significant and inspiring factor in all her projects, whilst upholding the core values of being considerate, innovative and passionate; inventive architectural and spatial solutions are captured by Dargo in her designs.

**Elaine Simpson:** Where do you locate yourself in the world of design Lauren?  
**Lauren Dargo:** I am an Interior Designer. I joined MLA (Michael Laird Architects) last September (2020), so I have been here for just over a year. I had earlier connections with MLA working on a few of their projects prior to that but yeah officially been here as of last September.

**ES:** What is your background leading up to your position?  
**LD:** I have been in the industry for just under four years. My journey started in the hospitality side of things, whereas here at MLA we focus on office

**"One of the best ways to test a project is to imagine you are the user"**

refurbishments and distillery work. I studied at DJCAD (Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, Dundee) in Interior and Environmental Design and once I had graduated it took me roughly about 6 months to get into the industry. I started off at a small practise where I worked in the Hospitality Design sector, designing for the likes of bars and restaurants which I absolutely loved, something I was passionate about. I think my reasoning behind that was because everything was primarily bespoke, so I had a lot of involvement in the design. It was a nice experience before moving on to MLA where I work mostly on commercial projects rather than residential ones. You will find though the meaning when talking about the 'user' and 'building' whether it be for residential or commercial use, is the same, they all speak of a form of community whether that be for a family or an organisation. You have always got to adapt the space based on the users, be it in an office space, distillery or someone's house. You must make sure you receive a brief, adapt it, ask the right questions, then design based on your findings.

**ES:** How do you start a project with your client?  
**LD:** There is always a lot of research involved during the initial phases of the project. I would obviously sit and listen during the brief, then I would ask any questions I felt were necessary. I would also go and have a look at the site based on the brief before I started the project to get an understanding of the scale and size of the space. ▶

**ES:** What does a typical design project involve?

**LD:** It just depends on what projects you are involved in. It can vary. You can sometimes be involved in a project from start to finish, or you might just come in at certain stages when your involvement is required. As a designer you might be involved in part of the feasibility stages at the beginning, the concept design, or through the tender process, then usually the architects take over and deliver for construction.

**ES:** Do you have constant contact with your clients?

**LD:** Our clients are all very good. I tend to have weekly meetings with them. It also depends on the scale of the project. I prefer the constant communication as it gives you the flexibility to build a relationship with the client and gives you someone to answer should you find yourself with a dilemma.

**ES:** Are your client's leaders in the design process? What happens if they don't agree with something you are suggesting?

**LD:** It just depends on if they are flexible enough. Usually, clients will listen to your recommendations. There can sometimes be value in a productive disagreement with the client.

**ES:** That comes from experience then?

**LD:** Yes, I guess so. I work with a big team. Experience obviously helps within that because you can say I have tried a certain way before, and it didn't work so I would like to improve on that or suggest something new for the project. It is all about the forming

of a good client relationship.

**ES:** Have you developed any form of design concept since graduating?

**LD:** Style is unique, and I guess working for a company bringing your own elements and style to a project is encouraged. It is difficult at times because I am given a brief and I need to follow that brief. You can interpretate the brief and offer your suggestions to the client so that could be your way of adapting your style and bringing it into a project.

**"I prefer the constant communication as it gives you the flexibility to build a relationship with the client and gives you someone to answer should you find yourself with a dilemma"**

**RIGHT** Concept development through storytelling, encapsulating elements of the city into the design bringing the old town and the new town of Edinburgh to life.



**"There can sometimes be value in a productive disagreement with the client"**





**LEFT** Team AT MLA collaborating on a design project working towards creating a beautiful and imaginative space where their clients can thrive.

**ES:** What are your preferred concepts and design methods?  
**LD:** I do love concept design so coming up with the scheme and coming up with colour palettes, are all typical interior design elements but falling fundamentally on what is going to bring a space to life. I love the hands-on element of my job, being interactive with the client, working closely with my team and getting involved in the design as much as possible.

**ES:** Do you take any design elements from one project to the next?  
**LD:** Yes, there are projects that certain clients will repeat a roll-out of the same scheme but in different buildings, so I take the same scheme and adapt it to the use and needs of another building.

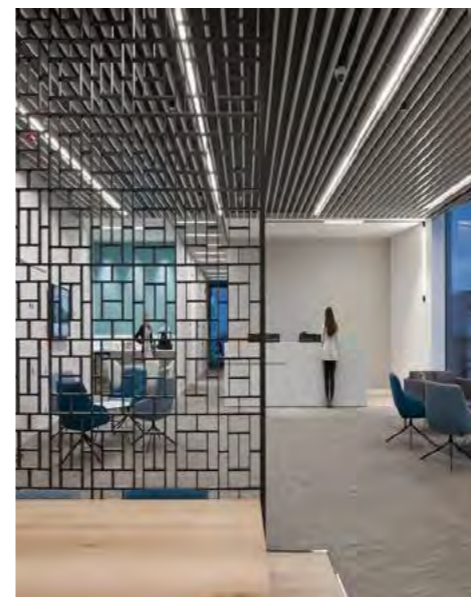
**ES:** What are your creative influences, and how do you bring them in to your designs?  
**LD:** To be honest I am very inspired by visiting other buildings and seeing what's been done already because you can often find little lovely bespoke design aspects that I think 'How can I make them work and how can I adapt them and make it my own for my own projects?' ▶

**"I love the hands-on element of my job, being interactive with the client, working closely with my team and getting involved in the design as much as possible"**

I love being inspired by other people's designs. I am not saying I take their designs and just copy them, but you need to be influenced by other interiors and how I can adapt it for my own projects.

**ES:** Would you agree that one of the best ways to test a project is to imagine that you are the client?

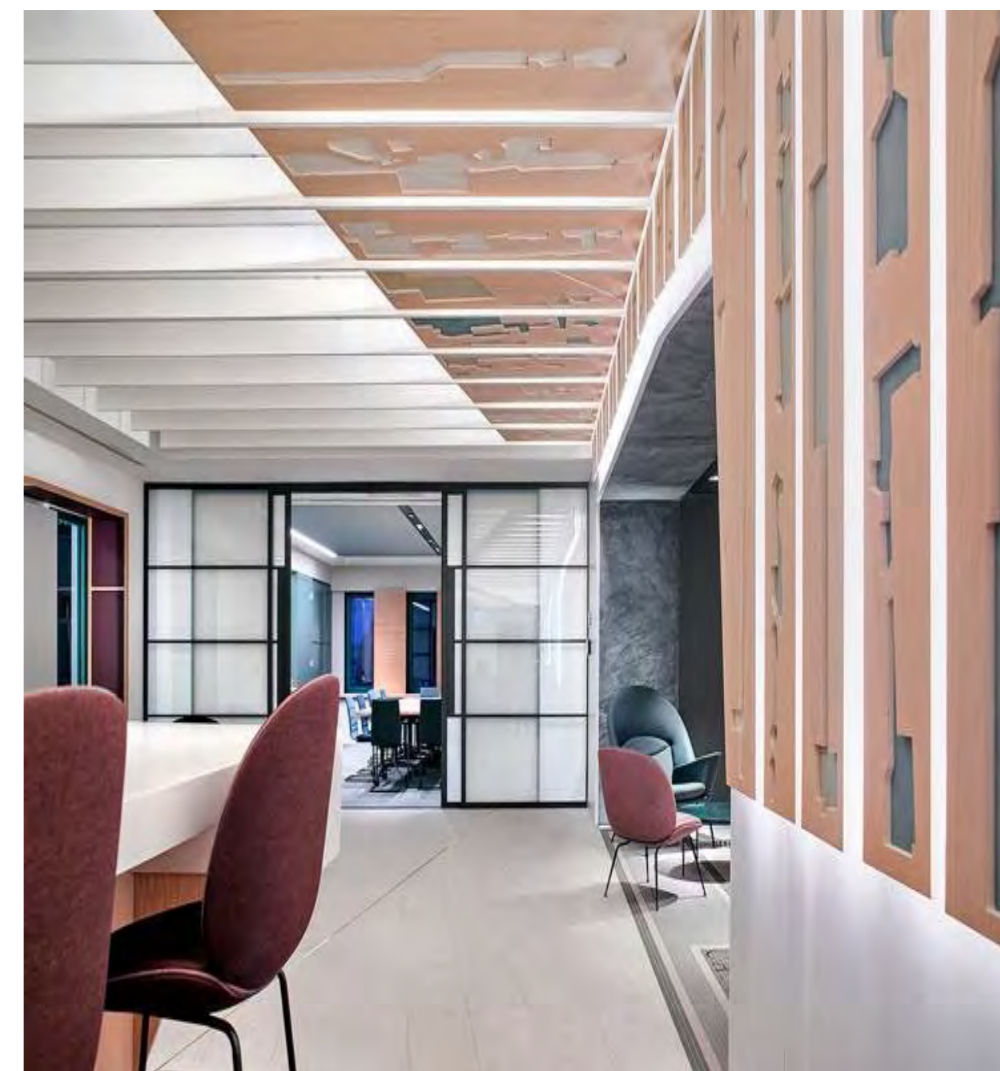
**LD:** The best way to imagine how the space is going to work or how the project is going to turn out is by imagining yourself as the user. The client can sometimes be above all the people that are going to be working with a space, so you need to think about the actual people working in the space. It is good to get feedback and comments on the existent space and how it works and how it doesn't work and then how we can take that and see how we can use it in a new and improved scheme. We encourage user's feedback once a scheme has been delivered as to what has worked and what hasn't because it is important to know. I can design something that I think can work but at the end of the day is it going to work for the people using the space?



**"I can design something that I think can work but at the end of the day is it going to work for the people using the space?"**

**BELOW LEFT** Another project for client's KPMG earning MLA the BCO Regional Award for best Fit out of Workplace in 2017

**BELOW** Interior refurbishment of KPMG's office building in Edinburgh earning MLA the BCO Awards Regional Winner for best Fit-out of Workplace



**ES:** How do you present your design proposal to the client?  
**LD:** It just depends on the project if I require to produce renders and 3d models. Usually if I am selling a new scheme then it would be worthwhile to do so. Clients can't always imagine or envision what a space would look like by looking at a 2d plan and material palettes so providing them with something more visual is essential.

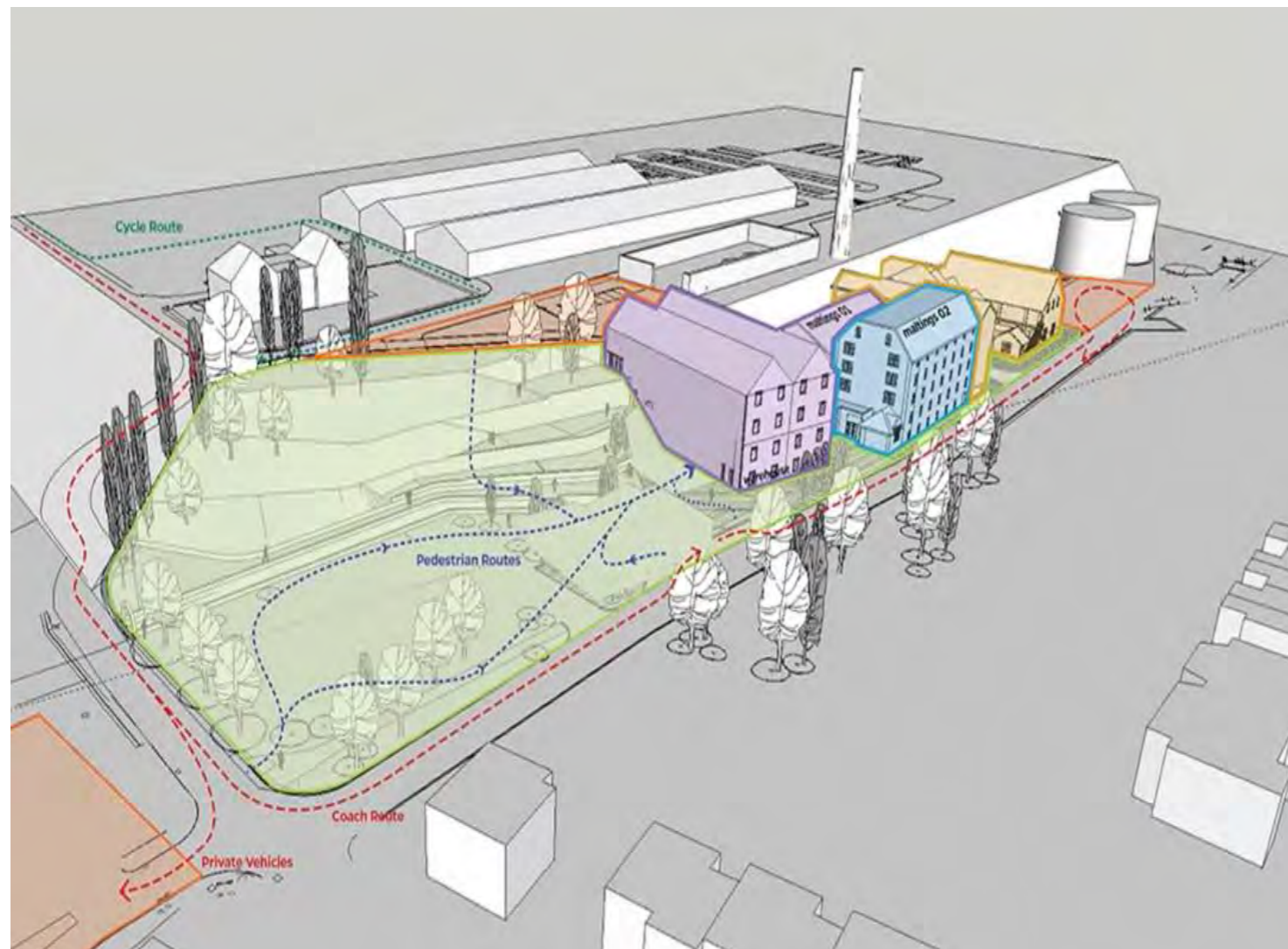


**ES:** Of the projects you are working on now, which one excites you most and why?  
**LD:** I enjoy different aspects from different projects. It just depends on what my involvement is in each.

I love working in the hospitality side of the project so when I do distillery work it reminds me of that. I love the customer journey; you think a lot about that aspect and their involvement within the space. ▶

**ABOVE** Glenkinchie Distillery, East Lothian attaining MLA winning the 2021 Scottish Design Awards in the Building Re-use category.

**BELOW** 3d modelling used as an integral part of the design process providing the client with a tangible visual to explore and agree details



**"I would like to think though that every project is unique"**

**ABOVE** Breathing a new lease of life into the existent distillery interior.

**RIGHT** Capturing the essence of timelessness in the design which will stand the test of time both functionally and aesthetically.





**“No architect can form a convenient plan, unless he ideally places himself in the situation of the person for whom he designs”**

LEFT Creating an environment connected to the culture and history of the place.

**ES:** Does MLA have a signature style?

**LD:** It just depends, it all comes down to the individual architects and the interior designers, the brief, and how much flexibility we have. Do we have our own unique style? Possibly. I would like to think though that every project is unique. Yes, there may be some similarities in them because we know what works so we can recommend but everyone in the team has their own style and hopefully can bring that to the projects.

**ES:** How closely do interior designers work with the architects as their roles seem to cross over?

**LD:** Yes, they do cross over, absolutely. I really like working with different teams within the company.

It is quite refreshing. You learn new things. You learn new terminology that you have never heard of before. Most projects though which have an interior involvement do cross over with the architects, they need to. You need to be aware of each other's involvement and roles. ▶

**“Aesthetics is very emotive. You will not get every single person walking into a space loving it”**

**ES:** How much attention is paid to the aesthetics of the design of the space?

**LD:** The aesthetic of a space is important as it sets the mood of the person who is going to be working or using the space. It is important. You will not get every single person walking into a space loving it, but you will have your differences and it is finding that balance where you know the interior is mainly going to work for everybody.

**ES:** Are there any times when the aesthetic approach oversees the design process in relation to how the person feels in the space?

**LD:** No. I can design what I like but it might not work for the users, so I need to pay attention and be careful about that.

Leading the way in designing for humans, Lauren's passion for 'getting it right' for her clients shines through in her imaginative and thoughtful design proposals. An ambassador in her field, Lauren proves that by careful planning and the right design decision making, leads her on the way to the creation of harmonious spaces for people to live and enjoy.

Her people-to-people communication plays a major aspect in her planning ethos and supports the words of J Wood in his 1792 publication 'A series of plans for cottages or habitations of labourer' where he suggests 'No architect can form a convenient plan, unless he ideally places himself in the

situation of the person for whom he designs'.

Lauren enhances the importance of providing her clients with an environment which helps not only to motivate and stimulate, but also works towards providing a space they can make their own, instigating interpretation of its use in a way that works for them.

Architects and designers with the understanding and passion shown by Lauren offer us the best hope of fostering a much-needed return to designing our spaces with a purpose, something accepted as the ideal by many but practised by few. ◆

# Love thy Neighbour

Whilst well-designed social housing can foster a sense of community; more so, thoughtless design can be detrimental to our health and to the spiritual and social integration of our communities, so why is this wonders  
**Elaine Simpson**

# Love

# thy

# Neighbour



**RIGHT** Neighbours exchanging in some friendly chat over the garden fence



## A poor door in fact could be a brand new shiny one, but just not as shiny as its neighbouring door



A 'POOR DOOR' is not a rickety old entrance that doesn't quite fit its doorframe, nor a door that is barely attached to its rusty hinges. A poor door in fact could be a brand new shiny one, but just not as shiny as its neighbouring door, which is more likely to be of better quality, more expensive and leads into an impressive hallway dressed by classy furniture and chic pendant lights.

Poor door, the term used to describe the segregation between the tenants of social housing homes to the other privately owned homes within the same community, has sprawled into a world of design disasters leaving our communities feeling disjointed and unloved.

More and more we are seeing this in our communities where the distinction between

social housing and privately owned housing is evident, despite forming part of the same community and is very much ostracised by its design features and quality.

As of this year, developers purchasing land for the purpose of building new residential homes are under legal restraint to make sure that a fifth of all their proposed new development is set aside for affordable and social housing. Sadly, this is resulting in a very visual and physical symbolic separation between both fractions whereby separate doors for the low-income families have been introduced.

The question of how to tackle the sensitive issue of such social segregation in our communities was passionately taken onboard throughout his career and empathetically addressed by architect Neave Brown, often referred to as 'the people's architect' ▶

for his work as a role model, a champion of high-quality social housing and community engagement in his field.

Having lived on two of the housing estates he designed, Alexandra Road estate in the London Borough of Camden, being one of them, Brown's passion for social inclusion is unmistakable throughout his enduring legacy design resulting in everyone having a front door, a private outdoor space and a communal social area being forefront in his drive for social equality. Reflecting on the success of the estate, which is now over 50 years old, Brown in his words 'Alexandra Road is still going strong. This modernist utopia looks just as radical as it ever did, lauded by council residents and architects alike' ▶

**LEFT** Rowley Way. Alexandra Road Estate Camden. Designed by Neave Brown. A pedestrian street where neighbours can be found chatting and children playing.

**BELOW** Neave Brown standing outside his home in Camden.



**"This modernist utopia looks just as radical as it ever did, lauded by council residents and architects alike"**

**“It means you can mix classes and incomes, and old and young all together in a continuous environment, where everybody gains by contact with everybody”**



LEFT Neave Brown, the ‘peoples architect’

Successful social housing design is not always plain sailing, perhaps down to the architect’s role in project teams diminishing in time over the years. Reflecting on the rationale behind this observation, Brown explores the eventualities leading to the role of the architect being undermined and unsupported with regards the communication phase of the project.

By failing to allow and accredit for the importance of direct communication between the client and the architects on the project, management companies are instead being set up to bridge the communication gap between both fractions resulting in decisions being made on both party’s behalf.

Perhaps such organisational blunders elucidate and expose why there are so many failed social housing developments throughout the country whereby through the blighted design process the

residents have been left to feel ‘different’ to the rest of the community labelling them with the ‘social housing’ class status rather than them feeling ‘a piece of the city’ proud of their homes that they live in.

Unmistakeable throughout his design process, contribution of high-density, low-rise schemes, in the area of social housing, Brown’s knack and supreme design skill and determination emerges, reflecting his passion of delivering in return a sense of ‘well-being’ to the local community.

Mystified, Brown speaks of fellow architects who have believed the solution for the need to meet housing demands and higher densities was by designing high buildings in low spaces and ‘plonking’ them in our cities coupled with the isolation between low- and high-income families. ▶

Refuting this intervention which led to a new kind of social class distinction being created in the response to the construction of high buildings, leaving the poor and unemployed with no option, Brown responded by designing low-rise homes giving people a front door and garden. ‘It means you can mix classes and incomes, and old and young all together in a continuous environment, where everybody gains by contact with everybody’ he says.

It is little surprise that Brown was referred to by his fellow architecture critics as ‘feisty, fearless and a staunch defender of social housing until the end’.

But not every social housing estate has a happy ending like the ones designed by Brown and other like-minded architects. As part of his research work, professor Matthew Carmona, of the University College of London, has been paying particular attention to the way new housing schemes across the country are being designed.

Recalling his findings, Carmona reveals the serious design mistakes made by housebuilders to meet the basic requirements for the residents in order to live comfortably is somewhat discouraging, resulting in our country falling far behind our European counterparts.

Failing to invest time and money in the design of our communities is becoming more and more noticeable resulting in the unveiling of such design flaws. Carmona explains ‘There are large companies making a lot of money out of housing development and having a huge impact on our country. They should be building sustainable estates which stand the test of time and allow communities to thrive’.

Regardless of the specific distinctive architecture and the promise of high-quality, accessible social homes, the messy cumulative effect of the design flaws are fashioning estates that are miserable places to stay. ▶

BELOW Architect, Planner and Researcher, Matthew Carmona

**“There are large companies making a lot of money out of housing development and having a huge impact on our country. They should be building sustainable estates which stand the test of time and allow communities to thrive.”**



Interestingly, the perception of the erosion of architect's responsibility is something that is still being critically kicked around, often alongside their lack of control over final product selection in design and build contracts, unfairly at times tagging them as a scapegoat to the botched social housing projects. Matthew Carmona argues 'Some housing developers are very interested in design quality and see it as a central part of their development model, others much less so.'

All hope is not lost, refreshingly pegging away at replicating Brown's principles of designing with a community spirit in mind, architects Bell Phillips with their multi award winning 'The Echoes' on Seabrook Rise Estate on behalf of Thurrock Council, is one of a neighbourliness success stories.

Hailed as a benchmark for new social housing

with their low-rise exemplar design, Bell Philips have teamed up the 'pleasing to the eye' facades with the inclusion of individual balconies, own front doors and courtyard gardens, crafting and restoring a crucial social bond between the residents and the neighbouring community.

Supporting encouragingly and responding positively to the many design clangers faced by communities in terms of social integration in the housing market, 'Place Alliance', was established in 2014 to focus on place quality. Through collaboration and better communication, their design ethos aims to authenticate a culture where the quality of 'place' is given the utmost priority. Programme manager, Valentina Giordano describes the goal of the company as to unite organisations and individuals in sharing the same drive and passion in the recognition of the unity between a well-designed space and our health. ▶



**Some housing developers are very interested in design quality and see it as a central part of their development model, others much less so."**



**ABOVE** The Echoes. New council housing development commissioned by Thurrock Council in 2016. Designed by Bell Phillips Architects setting a benchmark for new social housing.

**RIGHT** Generous balconies at The Echoes provide outside space for the residents and the chance to engage in conversation with their neighbours.



**LEFT** The time has come to reflect upon the design crisis the country is facing in relation to reuniting our neighbourhoods.

Undoubtedly, architecture plays an important role in our health and wellbeing with the harmonious relationship between both significantly thought to be responsible for improving and even extending our lifespan.

Regardless of age, the health problems we are facing today remains motionless and still unevenly applied across social class and status. Here lies a frequent topic of conversation by all involved in the building of a new home, by designer and architects alike, in that social divides still come into play when planning the designs.

Being in an unusually privileged position, if accepted, of being able to help to revolutionise the decline of neighbourliness, architects predictably have the power to change the current status quo of design homes that accommodate and encourage the integration of different social classes into our communities to live

alongside each other.

For our home designs to serve us better, we must first serve them better, by not just focusing our attention on the delivery of better designs but by accepting that architects need to be allowed to be more creative whilst equally confident in the knowledge through the trust and backing from the other specialists working on the projects.

Mutual respect and trust need to be exercised by all with regards the specification design proposals of the projects across all levels from the architects and installers down to the local authority building control who signs off a scheme.

The fact is, that from establishing local community panels to encourage and bridge the communication gap will help maintain an ongoing conversation about the design quality. Equally, the introduction of place quality ▶

research and the employment of more design specialists to work alongside the other professional planning staff, should also come into focus in order to tackle the issues faced by the local authorities highlighted by Carmona. "We are facing real problems in the capacity of local authorities to engage with these issues because anything related to place and design quality just takes a lot of time to get right. Local authorities are under tremendous pressure to get through applications, to show that they are delivering on the numbers."

Looking to the future, the need to put our design blunders to bed and move on with the promotion and engagement of better housing design has come. The need for improved collaboration between everyone involved in the designing, planning and building phases, hopefully will add to a more high-quality built environment for residents to live in and be proud of seen emerging.

Being open to the inspirations and aspirations highlighted by architects and designers alike, whilst enduring to raise the design quality of our new developments, we must encourage a more proactive community engagement, opening a pathway that leads to the successful building of a home in which we are proud to live in no matter your social class standing.

Architects can make a difference. By fearlessly taking on the challenge to impact on our homes, community spaces and most importantly, on our dignity, they can help mend the unstable relationship that exists between people and spaces.

Designing houses involves creating neighbours. Designing meaningful built houses nurtures the relationships between both. ◆



Bulb Stem Pot

by **BOWBEER**  
**DESIGNS**

[www.bowbeardesigns.com](http://www.bowbeardesigns.com)



# DESIGNING WITH PURPOSE



---

## SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENT

Elaine Simpson

How mindfulness can drive better design

## OVERVIEW

I have chosen to base my journalistic dissertation piece along the characteristics and structure of ICON eye magazine.

My reason for choosing this style of magazine over other design brands on the shelf, is I feel that the audiences I wish to target in my written articles are similarly engaging to the audiences targeted by ICON magazine them being the 'design literate' and the 'critically minded' readers.

I feel the tone of the ICON magazine allows for formal and complex discussions to be delivered in a less formal manner compared to other design led magazines which can leave the reader overwhelmed if set above their design knowledge limits. My publication remains just as informative all the same.

This format I feel allows for my readers to enjoy the magazine in a visually stimulating and memorable way no matter their degree of interest and knowledge in the world of design.

I have written my articles aimed to be enjoyed by all levels of readers if need be but best understood and specifically of interest to designers and architects alike who can relate to the principles and terminology used in my publication through their own knowledge and experience in the field of design.

I have based my articles on the built environment, mainly the home, and how mindfulness when designing, triggers such spaces, to become positive psychological tributaries on the inhabitants resulting in the dawning of beautiful relationships.

I have critically looked at the built environment old and new and discussed how the design choices made by our architects and designers on their journey, has greatly influence in what manner the spaces can make us feel and to the relationships we form within such.

My intention is to critically address 'How mindfulness drives better design' and through in-depth research from various forms of literature and interviews, I explored and composed an informative piece of writing which helps highlight, explain and bring to the forefront the importance of how the right 'people centred' design can have on the wellbeing of my readers.

## Structure of magazine

For the structure of the magazine, I have composed 3 articles which are in keeping with the length of the articles in the ICON magazine. I have deliberately made them this length as I feel they have enough content to hold the readers attention without them wanting to flick passed them onto the next page.

The themes of the 3 articles are tailored to come under the umbrella headings of the Icon magazine where the discussion takes place around architectural and design features.

The aim of the articles is to provide the reader with topical conversations in relation to the home and the meaning it has for us; the importance of mindfulness in the design of our built environment and how it can affect our wellbeing; and finally, the relationships we have with these spaces in relation to how the design principles can impact on our communities to encourage or refute social class integration.

I have included imagery in the articles and chosen striking main images which I feel complemented the style and contents of the publication.





## LAYOUT AND TYPOGRAPHY

### Magazine Front cover

Masthead - Title - ICON. Font used Montserrat Bold. 259.77pt. 89.07 high and 50 letter width. Most important element of the cover of the magazine. Gives brand identity. It is also the most consistent element throughout the publication issues and how the reader recognises the magazine on a stand. For the masthead I used the font size 259.77 which is also the largest font size I have used in the magazine. The size, placement and colour reflect the style used with the ICON magazine. I have used the font type 'Montserrat Bold' as it gave me the closest result to the font style used in the original magazine.



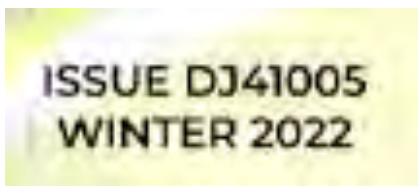
Figure 1 My reconstruction of the font style. Montserrat Bold.



Figure 2 ICON eye original

### Date Line

In this section I have included the quarterly season of Winter and the year, 2022, along with the module number, DJ41005, in replace of the issue number in order to reference and relate the magazine to this assignment. I used the font Montserrat Semi Bold with the font size 8pt. As this information, although relevant to the front cover, I feel it doesn't have to be as bold and stand out quite like the other information on the cover. This keeps with the style of the original magazine.



### Magazine Deck

Under the masthead, ICON, again in order to reference the module and identify my work I have used 'Communications Future Part 2' instead of describing the magazine's philosophy or type of publication as the magazine deck. I used the font Montserrat Bold again with the font size 11pt. Again, this keeps with the consistency of the original magazine design.

## Main Image

For the front cover I used an image from Peter Barber Architects. The image illustrates an illustration of a low-rise suburban neighbourhood designed with similar principles to Neave Brown's social housing with a tree lined street running along the middle of the terraced homes.

Barber, P Architects (2018). <http://www.peterbarberarchitects.com/grandville-gardens> (Accessed 12.01.2022).



I was particularly drawn to this illustrative image of Grandville Gardens which is discussed in the article I have titled 'Love Thy Neighbour'. The image is colourful, and I feel it draws my attention to look at all the detail of the proposed social housing estate which has been designed by the architects. It brings to life the actual image of the built estate which is included in the article. I chose the image as I felt it was relevant to my articles and is strong visually and eye-catching with an array of colours. I was able to include all the front cover details in black on to this image making the information pop out against the colours.

### Lead Article Line

For the lead article line, I have chosen 'Designing with Purpose. Why mindfulness drives better design'. This is the main theme for the issues of which the 3 inclusive articles I have written about. I have used a different font and colour in order to work with the theme of the main image and adjusted the size for it to have more prominence on the cover. I have chosen font Avenir Heavy.

### Cover Lines

I have set the point size of the cover lines to a smaller size than the lead article line. I have also balanced out their positioning to complement the positioning of the lead article line and masthead so that they are centred and symmetrical on the page. This choice of positioning again reflects the design of many of the ICON magazines.

### Front Cover



As shown in the below examples, the layout and imagery used in the magazine is important. The visual elements provide the reader with a visually pleasing and referenced representation to support the article's contents and themes. I have also made good use of white space in the articles to allow for the main features to stand out. Pull quotes as make a welcome addition to the articles as I find that I am drawn to them intriguing me to find them in context within the article.

## Fonts

I used the fonts Avenir, Avenir Next and Montserrat throughout my publication. I felt they gave me a good choice of options within each range for font thickness and shape and helped me produce my articles with a style keeping with the ICON magazine.

AVENIR NEXT REGULAR

AVENIR NEXT DEMI BOLD

AVENIR NEXT BOLD

AVENIR NEXT HEAVY

AVENIR BLACK

MONTSERRAT DEMI BOLD

MONTSERRAT BOLD

## Rear Cover



Bulb Stem Pot  
by **BOWBEER  
DESIGNS**

[www.bowbeerd designs.com](http://www.bowbeerd designs.com)



**DNA**

BY BOSS DESIGN

SHOWROOM—  
7 Clerkenwell Rd,  
London EC1M 3PA

SALES—  
T +44 (0) 1204 455570  
E sales@bossdesign.com  
bossdesign.com

ICON design  
Stand D12

boss  
design

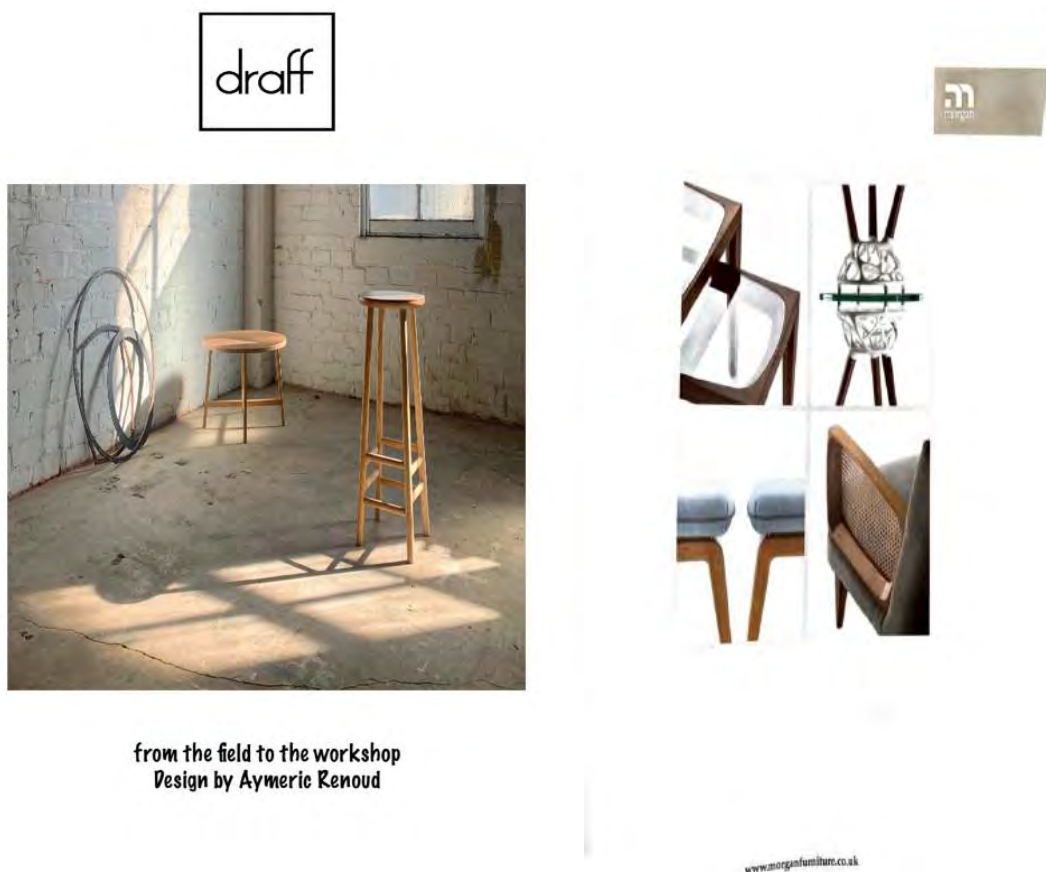
To complete, and in keeping with the ICON magazine format, I included a rear cover to my issue. I liked the simplicity of the Bulb Stem Pot by Bowbeer Design so I compiled my own rear cover. I think the clean solitary object works well highlighting the product and is a lovely visually pleasing way to finish the magazine cover off.

Bulb Stem Pot (2022) Available at: <https://www.bowbeerd designs.com/shop>  
(Accessed 23 January 2022)

## Adverts

In order to complement my articles, I have included adverts in my publication as I feel that helps keep the magazine format in line with ICON who include adverts to divide up their articles. I wanted to use the work of 'Draff' as one on my adverts to celebrate the success of a fellow DJCAD student.

Image: Draff studio (2017). Available at: [https://scontent.fgla3-1.fna.fbcdn.net/v/t1.6435-9/117832960\\_1674382922709948\\_6857275765831779269\\_n.jpg?nc\\_cat=109&ccb=1-5&nc\\_sid=e3f864&nc\\_ohc=dqinMLw-eJMAX\\_8n9hs&nc\\_ht=scontent.fgla3-1.fna&oh=00\\_AT\\_tbbpQtlajzwC7mtltApK65tpB9JOhoqy6G-3y3mcjoQ&oe=6211BC41](https://scontent.fgla3-1.fna.fbcdn.net/v/t1.6435-9/117832960_1674382922709948_6857275765831779269_n.jpg?nc_cat=109&ccb=1-5&nc_sid=e3f864&nc_ohc=dqinMLw-eJMAX_8n9hs&nc_ht=scontent.fgla3-1.fna&oh=00_AT_tbbpQtlajzwC7mtltApK65tpB9JOhoqy6G-3y3mcjoQ&oe=6211BC41). (Accessed 22 January 2022)

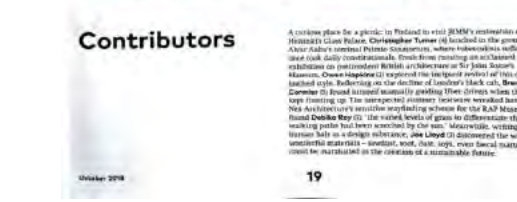


My rendition of an advert by Draff  
Editor's Letter and Contents Page

ICON magazine advert

I included an Editor's letter in my magazine in context with the Editor's letter within the ICON magazine. I felt this is a good way to introduce myself and allows the reader to give them a taster as to what the magazine articles topics are. The content page also summarises my articles and leads the reader to the corresponding related pages along with the Icon page referencing the editor and contributors.

I used the font Avenir Next Bold 24 for the Headings and Avenir Regular for the text body. This I felt keeps in line with the layout and typography style of the ICON magazine.





On the cover

Peter Barber Architects illustration of Grandville Garden's new social housing development

Front

3 EDITORS LETTER

4 CONTRIBUTORS



Architecture

18 Q&A: BY LAUREN DARGO

An exclusive interview with a master of people-centred design



Design

5 HOME SWEET HOME

Elaine Simpson explores what makes a house a home?

30 ARCHITECTS VERSUS HOUSING

A new chapter in the design of social housing helping integrate our communities. Can societal classes live in unison?

Front

23 **Scene**  
Dumbo's US Embassy rethinks what ICE's new waterports-imposed product

24 **Show round-up**  
Highlights from Design Shanghai, Design Jishu and DFCW

25 **Glory**  
The Wang Design Museum (aka off the mirror ball) is the right-of-the-way show

26 **Crimes Against Design**  
Outgoing architects are far from the people

27 **Opinion**  
Online magazines have little to do with architecture, says Tim Abeyaratne

Design

40 **Sheridan Design Society**  
Will China's new V&A social museum mark a shift from manufacturer to creator?

50 **Shanghai's new**  
China's first 'Fancy' (aka Age Style)

57 **Emerging studios**  
The best home-grown talent working in China today

64 **Icon of the month**  
The strong evolution of propaganda posters

66 **On A. O. Hing**  
Rushes to the top and the importance of knowledge



Architecture Review

78 **Negotiates for the people**  
Wang Yong's new housing shows care and collaboration

89 **Photostory**  
Scott Newell reveals the 'surprising emptiness' of Chinese cities

99 **Sex awareness**  
China enters world-stage as designers of sustainable cities

104 **Icon of the month**  
Shanghai's Monument to the People's Heroes balances futurism with sentimentality

106 **Q&A: Ma Yansong**  
The architect explains how Beijing and China are entering a new phase of development

117 **Review: Every House in London Road**  
The philosophy behind the Grant Group's low-rise high-density housing solution

121 **Review: AA Women in Architecture**  
The female architects behind, patronised and written out of history

127 **Bethink: The key book**  
Paper meets electronics in this interactive invention

130 **What Buildings?**  
Test your architectural smarts with a new quiz from Tom Bewesworth

On the cover  
Photo of  
Sheridan Design Society  
by Scott Newell



This is the image I used in my editor's letter page. The image is from Vitra and relates to their Home Dynamic e paper article.

<https://register.vitra.com/home-dynamics>

[https://www.vitra.com/storage/asset/5171696/storage/master/download/E-Paper\\_6\\_HomeDynamics\\_EN.pdf](https://www.vitra.com/storage/asset/5171696/storage/master/download/E-Paper_6_HomeDynamics_EN.pdf) (Accessed 22 January 2022)



## Article 1

### Home Sweet Home

Word Count 1805

#### Topic

'Home Sweet Home' is centred around the importance of the home and what it means to us. I chose this topic as the first article in my 'Design with a purpose' series as I felt it was a good introduction for the reader to appreciate as to how our built environment can affect our wellbeing. It also explains how mindfulness can drive better design when we understand the meaning of our environments. I wrote this article in response to how the role of our homes has taken on very different functions since the introduction of the restrictions of our movements due to the global pandemic, COVID 19 whereby we were forced to spend more time within our humble abodes.

#### Aims

- to cover the history of the home
- to introduce and focus on what we have learnt from past design principles introduced by renowned architects, Le Corbusier, Henry Roberts and Hannes Meyers.
- to distinguish the different connotational links between the 'house' and the 'home'
- the set-up and layouts of our homes based on the traditional family unit
- how we spend our time within the home
- the role of the home and its functions to support our personal identity

#### Structure

To begin the article, I introduced the importance of the home and its functionality and structure in our lives, to the reader. By allowing them to take time to stop and think about the role of the home, which can sometimes go unnoticed, the space where we spend a great deal of our lives was acknowledged. This led me to the analysis of distinguishing between a house and a home learning from past principles and theories in their design. Finally, the distribution and the roles within the home were discussed along with the importance as to how the considerate design can make way for relationship reactions to the space.

My research consisted of examining the home and its meaning using a variety of architectural journals, literature and online resources as the main sources of my referencing and understanding of the subject. I included a variety of images to support my article providing the reader with good, clear visual representation of the subject and principal leaders discussed.

## References

Aureli, P, Tattarra, M (2018). Architecture Review. Soft Cell: The minimum dwelling. Available at: <https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/soft-cell-the-minimum-dwelling>. (Accessed 25 October 2021).

Borra, B (2013). The City as a Project, 'Hannes Meyer: Co-op Architecture'. Available at: <http://thecityasaproject.org/2013/05/hannes-meyer-co-op-architecture/> (Accessed 26 October 2021).

Després, C. (1991). The meaning of home: Literature review and directions for future research and theoretical development. *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research*, 8(2), 96-115. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43029026>. (Accessed 27 October 2021).

[www.Dictionary-quotes.com](http://www.Dictionary-quotes.com). Quotations by Le Corbusier. Home. 2008. Available at: <https://www.dictionary-quotes.com/a-house-is-a-machine-for-living-in-le-corbusier/> (Accessed 8 October 2021).

Farrow, A, Taylor, H, Golding, J (2010). 'Time Spent in the Home by Different Family Members', *Taylor and Francis Online Environmental Technology*, Volume 18, Issue 6, Pages 605-613. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09593331808616578>. (Accessed 12 October 2021).

Gallagher, D (2001). Open university, Le Corbusier. Available at [https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/history/heritage/le-corbusier?in\\_menu=15448](https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/history/heritage/le-corbusier?in_menu=15448). (Accessed 26 October 2021).

Gosling, S, Craig, K, Martin, N, Pryor, M. (2017) 'The Personal Living Space Cue Inventory', *SAGE Premier, Environment and behaviour*, 2005-0, Volume 37(5) P 683-705. Available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0013916504274011>. (Accessed 12 October 2021).

Rapoport, A (1982). *The Meaning of the Built Environment. A nonverbal communication approach.* Sage Publications. USA. First Printing.

The Scottish Government (2019). *Scotland's People Annual Report.* Available at: <https://shs.theapsgroup.scot/2019/38/>. (Accessed 28 October 2021).

Thornock, C, Nelson, L, Porter, C, Evans-Stout, C (2019). 'There's no place like home: The associations between residential attributes and family functioning', *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, Volume 64, P39-47. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0272494418302731>. (Accessed 24 October 2021)

### Images

Image 1:1. Do Ho Suh (2013) *Home Within Home.* Available at: <https://www.victoria-miro.com/artists/188-do-ho-suh/works/image2336/> (Accessed 17 January 2022)



Image 1:2 Unknown Photographer. *Le Corbusier*, © FLC-ADAGP. Available at: <https://www.conceptualfinearts.com/cfa/2019/03/11/le-corbusier-private-studio-apartment/> (Accessed 18 January 2022).



Le Corbusier's at home in France

Image: 1:3 Nick Hedges (2015). View of tenement backs Glasgow. Available at: [https://ichef.bbci.co.uk/news/976/cpsprodpb/1734E/production/86245059\\_vie\\_wofthenementbacksglasgow1971383-15.jpg](https://ichef.bbci.co.uk/news/976/cpsprodpb/1734E/production/86245059_vie_wofthenementbacksglasgow1971383-15.jpg) (Accessed 18 January 2022)



Image 1:4 Nick Hedges (2015). Mother living with her children in an overcrowded single end tenements flat in Glasgow 1971. Available at: [https://ichef.bbci.co.uk/news/976/cpsprodpb/1196C/production/86244027\\_pre\\_ss-1.jpg](https://ichef.bbci.co.uk/news/976/cpsprodpb/1196C/production/86244027_pre_ss-1.jpg) (Accessed 18 January 2022).



Image 1:5 Lambert, H (1945). A family gather in the Livingroom to listen to the radio. Available at: <https://api.time.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/radio.jpeg?w=1430&quality=70> (Accessed 20 January 2022)



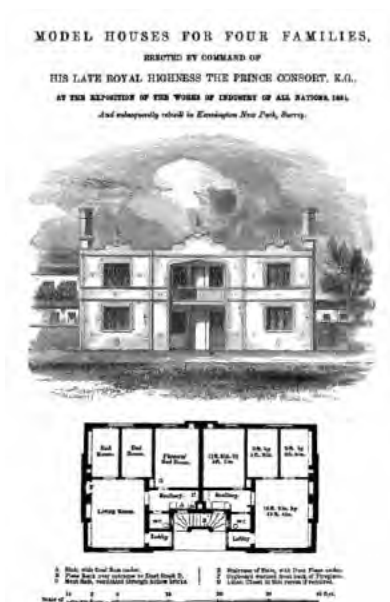
Image 1:6 Galerie Berinson (2018). Hannes Meyers Co-op Interieur. Available at: [https://cdn.ca.emap.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2018/07/meyer\\_001\\_300dpi-1024x1014.jpg](https://cdn.ca.emap.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2018/07/meyer_001_300dpi-1024x1014.jpg). (Accessed 01 November 2021)



Image 1:7 Galerie Berinson. Hannes Meyer. Available at: [https://static.dezeen.com/uploads/2018/11/bauhaus-100-director-hannes-meyer\\_dezeen\\_1704\\_col\\_0-1704x2290.jpg](https://static.dezeen.com/uploads/2018/11/bauhaus-100-director-hannes-meyer_dezeen_1704_col_0-1704x2290.jpg). (Accessed 1 November 2021)



Image 1:8 Unknown Photographer. Model House for Families. Available at: <https://thelondonphile.com/2012/05/02/prince-alberts-model-cottages/> (Accessed 10 November 2021).



Article 2  
Discourse - Lauren Dargo  
Word Count 2372

Topic

Lauren Dargo is an Interior Designer with Michael Laird Architects and a former Interior and Environmental Design student at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design. For this second article in the 'Designing with Purpose' series, I wanted to take the reader on a first-hand design journey lead by Lauren explaining the importance of getting her design choices right for the user of the spaces she creates for her clients. I also wanted to focus on the importance of 'people centred' design along with the need for the compassionate direction that ultimately leads to a space the user can make their own.

### Aim

- gain first-hand insights from someone working at the forefront of the design industry to glean the importance of getting the design of our built environment right for the users, whilst supporting the theory behind Kurt Lewin's equation on Environmental Psychology.
- provide the reader with an insight to the design journey connection between a designer and the client
- relight the faith in designers creating spaces with a purpose

### Structure

I felt in order to gain the right information to support my article, a thought-provoking question and interview format would work best. I felt by using this format it provided the reader with a more enjoyable, emotive and personal hands-on approach of sharing the design insights gleaned from Lauren. The interview format allowed for a conversational style to be adopted, connecting the reader directly to a designer experienced in the field rather than reading an analysis of the principles and methods used when designing for a client brief.

For my research, I started off looking into Environmental Psychology, its meaning and principles in order to better understand the relationship between people and places. I thereafter set about compiling a set of questions which I hoped would provide the reader with sufficient evidence of how a people centred approach to designing works well within the industry.

The images I used for my article were mainly from the work of Lauren's company, Michael Laird Architects, giving the reader a visual representation whilst supporting the details discussed in the interview.

### Supplementary Document

### References



Bonnes, M. and Secciaroli, G. (1995) Environmental Psychology. A Psycho-social Introduction. London: Sage.

Cassidy, T. (2003) Environmental Psychology. Behaviour and Experience in Context. England: Psychology Press. Contemporary Psychology Series.

Kopec, D. (2012) Environmental Psychology for Design. New York: Fairchild Books. Second Edition.

Lawrence, R (1987) Housing, Dwellings and Homes. Design theory, research and practice. Great Britain. John Wiley and Sons Ltd.

Rapoport, A. (1982) The Meaning of the Built Environment. A Nonverbal Communication Approach. California: Sage Publications. First Printing.

Michael Laird Architects (2021) MLA [michaellaird.co.uk](https://michaellaird.co.uk/). Available at:<https://michaellaird.co.uk/>(Accessed: 25 November 2021).

Wood, J (1792). A series of plans for cottages or habitation of labourer. London. P1.

Images

Image 2:1 - LinkedIn website. LinkedIn.com. Available at: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lauren-dargo-30235613a>. [Accessed 25<sup>th</sup> November]

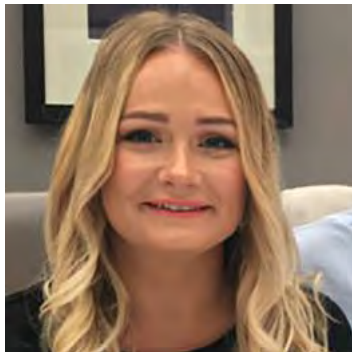


Image 2:2 - Yin, J. (2021) Lewin's Equation. Available at: <https://jamielyy.com/blog/lewins-equation-behavior-is-a-function-of-environment> (Accessed: 23 November 2021).

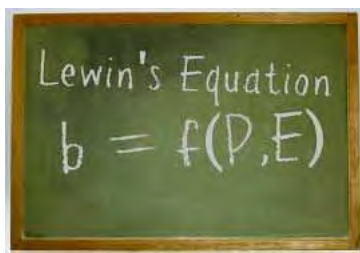


Image 2:3 - Cadzow, D. (2019) Masterplanning. Available at: <http://michaellaird.co.uk/our-services/master-planning/> (Accessed: 23 November 2021).



Image 2:4 - Cadzow, D (2019). Storytelling. Available at <https://michaellaird.co.uk/case-studies/rosebank-distillery-3/> (Accessed 20 November 2021)



Image 2:5 - Laird, M (2021) Collaboration-Opt-1. Available at: <http://michaellaird.co.uk/our-services/mla-strategicconsultancy/> (Accessed: 15 November 2021).



Image 2:6 - Hunter, K (2021) Glenkinchie Distillery 3d visuals. Available at: <https://michaellaird.co.uk/2021-scottish-design-awards-winner> (Accessed: 19 November 2021).



Image 2:7 - Cadzow, D (2019). Saltire Court Fit Out of Workplace. Available <https://michaellaird.co.uk/projects/kpmg-edinburgh/> (Accessed 26 November 2021)



Image 2:8 Barbour, D - (2017). St Vincent Plaza Fit Out of Workplace. Available <https://michaellaird.co.uk/projects/kpmg-glasgow/> (Accessed 26 November 2021)



Image 2:9 - Hunter, K (2021) Glenkinchie Distillery Interior. Available at: <https://michaellaird.co.uk/projects/glenkinchie-distillery/> (Accessed: 23 November 2021).



Image 2:10 - Hunter, K (2021) Glenkinchie Distillery Interior. Available at: <https://michaellaird.co.uk/projects/glenkinchie-distillery/> (Accessed: 21 November 2021).



Image 2:11 - Hunter, K (2021) Glenkinchie Distillery Interior. Available at: <https://michaellaird.co.uk/projects/glenkinchie-distillery/> (Accessed: 21 November 2021).



<http://michaellaird.co.uk/our-services/mla-strategicconsultancy/>

## Interview Transcription with Lauren Dargo - 17.11.2021

ES What is your position within the company Lauren?

LD I am an Interior Designer. I joined MLA (Michael Laird Architects) last September (2020), so I have been here for just over a year. I had earlier connections with MLA working on a few of their projects prior to that but yeah officially been here as of last September.

ES. What is your background leading up to your position?

LD. I have been in the industry for just under four years. My journey started in the hospitality side of things, whereas here at MLA we focus on office refurbishments and distillery work. I studied at DJCAD in Interior and Environmental Design and once I had graduated it took me roughly about 6 months to get into the industry. Prior to that I had worked in retail. I started off at a small practise where we worked in hospitality design, so designing for the likes of bars and restaurants which I absolutely loved. I was passionate about it and I think my reasoning behind that was because everything was primarily bespoke so you had a lot of involvement in the design, it wasn't just furnisher solution. It was nice to experience that and then I moved over into MLA where we do more office refurbishment as well as many other projects going on as well.

You will find the meaning is always the same when talking about the 'user' whether it be residential or commercial. You have always got to adapt the space based on the users be it in an office space, distillery or someone's house then you must make sure you receive a brief, you adapt it, you ask the right questions then you design based on your findings.

ES How do you start a project with your client?

LD. There is always a lot of research involved. What tends to happen is I get a lot of work through the same clients', but they always tend to brief me at the beginning as to what the project is going to involve. I would obviously sit and listen during the brief, then I would ask any questions I felt were necessary. I would also go and have a look at the site based on the brief before I started the project to get an understanding of the scale and size of the space. I would then just start adapting on what I know, based on the client's brief, and what my interpretations are, and then go from there.

ES Do you always work on adaptive re-use of buildings and spaces, or do you work on new builds too?

LD. Yes, our architects can work on new builds. A lot of the projects that our team work on though are refurbishments. We haven't worked on too many that have been new builds and interiors, but our architects do create new builds with a cat A fit out then the clients or tenants will move in. It just depends really on what the client is after.

ES What does a typical design project involve?

LG. It just depends on what projects you are involved in. It can vary. You can sometimes be involved in a project from start to finish, or you might just come in at certain stages when your involvement is required. So as a designer you might be involved in part of the feasibility stages at the beginning, the concept design, or through the tender process, then usually the architects take over and deliver for construction. I might be involved within that depending on if there are any bespoke interior fit-out items I can support the team with but typically I would say I am probably more heavily involved in the beginning and the middle and then our team tend to deliver in the end.

ES Do you have constant contact with your clients?

LD Our clients are all very good. I tend to have weekly meetings with them. It depends on the scale of the project. It is important to have consistent communication with them because things arise weekly if not daily and you are best to keep good communication, discuss what your findings are, overcome them, find a solution if required, and then progress with the project. If you didn't have that constant communication, you would find yourself with the dilemma of who is going to answer. You need someone to answer, and it tends to be your client. I prefer the constant communication as it gives you the flexibility to build a relationship with the client so you know you can pick up the telephone or you can drop them an e mail if a problem arises for example. Sometimes it is good to get their general opinion on things in the design scheme if things change and to check they are happy with what I am suggesting or what I may proceed with.

ES. Are the clients always leaders in the design process? What happens if they don't agree with something you are suggesting?

LD. It just depends on if they are flexible enough. Usually, clients will listen to your recommendations. So, if they suggested something and for various reasons it might not work, but you have the evidence to show that as a design team we think this would be better for example like space planning, we can suggest alternative routes. Most of the time, the client will end up agreeing as they find that they haven't thought it through, and it isn't until you start showing examples that they will then accept what you are proposing.

ES That comes from experience then?

LD. Yes, I guess so. I work with a big team, so sometimes the project will include discussions with the architects, it just depends on what the queries are.

Experience obviously helps within that because you can say I have tried a certain way before, and it didn't work so I would like to improve on that or suggest something new for the project.

ES Is space used very different now in response to COVID 19?

LD. Well it started to adapt before COVID. I think a lot of offices are starting to involve a lot more open plan space. They want their staff to be more collaborative. It doesn't necessarily mean they have to be art-based clients. I work on a lot of bank jobs, and you can imagine the people sit behind their computer every day, but my aim is to create social environments and for getting people to interact in them in different ways. Do they have to be sat behind a desk all the time or can they go to a sort of touch down zone or a collaborative space where they can engage or sit with their laptop but feel more part of the office? I think COVID has probably changed that opinion for a lot of companies because they need to adapt now because they no longer will have full capacity of staff returning to the office, so they are probably going to reconsider how staff engage not just with one another but with their work as well.

ES Is there an element of home brought to the workspace given that work has been taken to the home due to COVID?

LD. In terms of bringing home to work I guess I am saying we include soft settings like soft seating settings and more collaborative open plan working spaces, I guess you can argue that is more like a home environment rather than vice versa going home and working from there.

ES Have you developed any form of design concept since graduating?

LD. Style is unique, and I guess as a company bringing your own elements and style to a project is encouraged. It is difficult at times because I am given a brief and I need to follow that brief. You can interpretate the brief and offer your suggestions to the client so that could be your way of adapting your style and bringing it into a project. I work very closely with my clients in all the schemes. Most of the schemes are based on the brief and my perception of that.

ES. What are your preferred concepts and design methods?

LD. Well I do love concept design so coming up with the scheme and coming up with palettes, are all typical interior design things but falls fundamentally on what is going to bring a space to life. It is making sure that you have nailed that and making sure that your space plan works for the user and that it reflects the client's brief. I love the hands-on element of my job, being interactive with the client,



working closely with my team and getting involved in the design as much as possible.

ES. Do you take any design elements from one project to the next?

LD. Yes there are projects that certain clients will repeat a roll-out of the same scheme but in different buildings, so I take the same scheme and adapt it to the use and needs of another building.

ES. What are your creative influences, and do you try and use them in your designs?

LD. To be honest I am very inspired by visiting other buildings and seeing what's been done already because you can often find little lovely bespoke design aspects that I think how I can make them work and how can I adapt them and make it our own for our own projects? I love being inspired by other people's designs. I am not saying we take their designs and just copy them, but you need to be influenced by other interiors and how you can adapt it for your own projects.

ES Would you agree that one of the best ways to test a project is to imagine that you are the client?

LD. The best way to imagine how the space is going to work or how the project is going to turn out is by imagining yourself as the user. The client can sometimes be above all the people that are going to be working with a space, so you need to think about the actual people working in the space. So sometimes it is good to get feedback and comments on the existent space and how it works and how it doesn't work and then how we can take that and see how we can use it in a new and improved scheme. We encourage user's feedback once a scheme has been delivered as to what has worked and what hasn't worked because it is important to know. I can design something that I think can work but at the end of the day is it going to work for the people utilising the space. It is more important to think about how the users are going to interact with the space even though the client has provided you with a specific brief.

ES Do you have an example of when the design environment was influenced by the user?

LD. For example if I have been working on previous projects with the same client, same company, I sometimes know what has worked and what has not worked so I can adapt that for the users in our next project and it tends to be around how they interact with furniture. The space is important, as it needs to be how they feel about working in certain environments. Some people are just so used to working at a desk that they might not enjoy working in a collaborative setting whereas other people thrive on it. It is just finding the right balance for them.

ES Are you informed by the users of the space or is feedback fed to you through the client?

LD. I don't have direct contact with the users. It tends to be the client will go back and they will gather the data and they come back to me and tell me what they have received from the users for example on a certain floor or a certain group and then let me know what they need for the space to work or what I need to adapt for their needs.

ES. How do you present your design proposal to the client?

LD. It just depends on the project if I require to produce renders and 3d models. Usually if I am selling a new scheme then it would be worthwhile to do so. Clients can't always imagine or envision what a space would look like by looking at a 2d plan and material palettes so providing them with something more visual is essential.

ES Of the projects you are working on now, which one excites you most and why?

LD I enjoy different aspects from different projects. It just depends on what my involvement is in each. I love working in the hospitality side of the project so when I do distillery work it reminds me of that. I love the customer journey; you think a lot about that aspect and their involvement within the space.

ES. Does MLA have a signature style?

LD It just depends, it all comes down to the architects and the interior designers and it really comes down to the briefs as well and how much flexibility we have. Do we have our own unique style? Possibly. I would like to think though that every project is unique. Yes, there may be some similarities in them because we know what works so we can recommend but everyone in the team has their own style and hopefully can bring that to their projects. I am sure that all architects and interior designers have their preferred materials and methods, but it always comes down to cost.

ES. How closely do interior designers work with the architects as their roles seem to cross over?

LD. Yes, they do cross over, absolutely. I really like working with different teams within the company. It is quite refreshing. You learn new things. You learn new terminology that you have never heard of before. Most projects though which have an interior involvement do cross over with the architects, they need to. You need to be aware of each other's involvement and roles.

ES How much attention is paid to the aesthetics of the design of the space?

LD. The aesthetic of a space is important as it sets the mood of the person who is going to be working or using the space. A lot of spaces that we design can be

heavily branded because the client wants to sell a product at the end of it or it is part of a company's vision whereby, they like to create a vision around their spaces. That can be through graphics and things like that. It is important, people need to feel comfortable in the space that they work or use but as importantly enjoy it as well. Aesthetics is very emotive. You will not get every single person walking into a space loving it, but you will have your differences and it is finding that balance where you know the interior is going to work for everybody.

ES Are there any times when an aesthetic approach oversees the design project over how the person feels in the space?

LD. No. I can design what I like but it might not work for the users, so I need to pay attention and be careful about that.

ES. Can you explain which tools you use to engage with your clients during the design process?

LD. I often just have telephone calls now due to COVID restrictions, and present things virtually but prior to that I would have the client visit the office for consultation and I would also visit the site. But it doesn't matter where you are in the project sometimes face-to-face is the most efficient way of engaging with your client. It is also good to summarise your face-to-face conversation with an email detailing what was discussed so if you have missed anything it is a good opportunity for someone to catch you before you start developing the project any further.

## Article 3 - Love Thy Neighbour

Word Count 1830

### Topic

'Love Thy Neighbour' is the final article in the 'Design for Purpose' series and for this one I opted to continue with the topic of 'home' but examine it from a different perspective, from the angle of the design of social housing in Britain. I looked to discuss as to why if designed without care and thought this can subsequently lead to a detrimental effect to our health coupled with the breakdown of social inclusion with the rest of the community, leading to ostracization. In summary the need for neighbourliness is evident within our communities.

.

### Aim

- highlight the visual segregation that is caused from the poor design of social housing over the design of private housing
- the design principles involved in securing the social inclusion within our communities
- examine the successful social housing projects and what can be learnt from them
- how badly designed projects effect the health and spirit of the community
- how modern-day architects can do more in their design role

### Structure

I led into this topic examining and highlighting the struggles that people in social housing felt in relation to the rest of the community and as to why they were left to feel 'socially' detached. I researched the work of Neave Brown referred to the 'people's architect' in his successful planning and designing of social housing in the Camden area of London likening his principles and goals to creating homes for the lower-class residents in the area to be proud of and afford a community spirit. Matthew Carmona supported my article in his research work he carried out, highlighting the shortcomings found in local authority whilst designing social housing. I finished up my article highlighting the need for architects and designers to become more involved in their design decisions and become more confident in pushing for better design quality for our social housing projects.

For the visual impact for this article, I chose a selection of photographs that introduced the main contributors to my research and images which helped support the successful social housing developments in the country.

## References

Bell Philips Architects (2016). Projects. The Echoes. Available at <https://www.bellphillips.com/project/seabrooke-rise/#slider-7>. (Accessed 10 January .2022).

Braidwood, Ella (2017). 'Neave Brown: We must never, never, never again do buildings like Grenfell'. Architecture Review. Available at: <https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/neave-brown-we-must-never-never-never-again-do-buildings-like-grenfell>. (Accessed 2 January 2022)

Citizens Information (2021). Affordable housing schemes. Available at: [https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/housing/owning-a-home/help\\_with\\_buying\\_a\\_home/affordable\\_housing.html](https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/housing/owning-a-home/help_with_buying_a_home/affordable_housing.html) (Accessed 31 December 2021)

Cockayne, Emily. (2012). Love Thy Neighbour. Architecture Review. Available at: <https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/love-thy-neighbour> (Accessed 28.12.2021)

Frearson, Amy (2019). 'Alexandra Road Estate'. Icon Magazine. Issue 196. Page 128.

Houses of the Oireachtas (2021). The Affordable Housing Act, 2021. Available at: <https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/act/2021/25/eng/enacted/a2521.pdf> (Accessed 02 January 2022).

Jessel, Ella (2021). Roundtable: Specifying after Grenfell. Architects Journal. Available at [https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/sponsored-content/roundtable-specifying-after-grenfell?eea=\\*EEA\\*&eea=dFNPMEZyd3gyVUJVYmt0UUxhdXhFUEFjRmpScG9GS EQ5TEdFc1Y1MWNobz0%3D&utm\\_source=acs&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=FABS\\_AJ\\_EDI\\_REGS\\_DAILY\\_060122&deliveryName=DM24812](https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/sponsored-content/roundtable-specifying-after-grenfell?eea=*EEA*&eea=dFNPMEZyd3gyVUJVYmt0UUxhdXhFUEFjRmpScG9GS EQ5TEdFc1Y1MWNobz0%3D&utm_source=acs&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=FABS_AJ_EDI_REGS_DAILY_060122&deliveryName=DM24812). (Accessed 06 January 2022).

Khanchandani, P (2019). Crimes against Design, 'Poor Doors', Icon magazine. Issue 196. Page 22

Mair, J (2018). 'Housing pioneer Neave Brown dies aged 88', Dezeen Magazine. Available at <https://www.dezeen.com/2018/01/10/architect-neave-brown-dies-obituary/>. Accessed 03 January 2022

Place Alliance (2020). Campaigns and Public Engagement. Available at <https://placealliance.org.uk/campaigns/> (Accessed 10 January 2022).

Wall, T (2020). The guardian.com. Serious design flaws in many housing estates, report claims', Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/jan/19/housing-giants-put-profit-before-peoples-needs-report-reveals>. (Accessed 10 January 2022).

Wilmore, J (2021). More than 100,000 affordable homes delivered. Scottish Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/news/more-than-100-000-affordable-homes-delivered> (Accessed 31 December 2021)

### Images

Image 3:1 - Architectural Review. Architectural-review.com. Love Thy Neighbour. Available at <https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/love-thy-neighbour>. (Accessed 3 January 2022).



Image 3:2 The Modern House. Rowley-way-ix. Available at: <https://www.themodernhouse.com/past-sales/rowley-way-ix/> (Accessed: 10 January 2022).



Image 3:3 - Searle, P (2018) Neave Brown at his home in Camden. Insidehousing.co.uk. Available at: [https://omghcontent.affino.com/AcuCustom/Sitename/DAM/086/NEAVE-BROWN-1-MIN\\_\\_thumb.jpg](https://omghcontent.affino.com/AcuCustom/Sitename/DAM/086/NEAVE-BROWN-1-MIN__thumb.jpg) (Accessed 21 January 2022)



Image 3:4 - RIBA Architecture.com. Riba.app.box.com. Neave Brown - 2018 Royal Gold Medal. Available at: <https://riba.app.box.com/v/RoyalGoldMedal2018> (Accessed 10 January 2022).



Image 3:5 Matthew Carmona. Wikipedia.org. Available at: [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f3/Matthew\\_Carmona.jpg/440px-Matthew\\_Carmona.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f3/Matthew_Carmona.jpg/440px-Matthew_Carmona.jpg) (Accessed 23 January 2022).



Image 3:6 Bell Philips Architects. Projects. The Echoes. Available at: <https://www.bellphilips.com/project/seabrooke-rise/#slider-7>. bellphilips.com. (Accessed 10 January 2022).



Image 3:7 Bell Philips Architects. Projects. The Echoes. Available at: [https://www.bellphilips.com/wpcontent/uploads/2014/08/seabrooke\\_balconies.jpg](https://www.bellphilips.com/wpcontent/uploads/2014/08/seabrooke_balconies.jpg). (Accessed 23 January 2022)





Image 3:8 . RMJM.com. 'Why the Architectural World has a responsibility towards social housing'. Available at: [https://rmjm.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/shutterstock\\_1098538682-2048x1365.jpg](https://rmjm.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/shutterstock_1098538682-2048x1365.jpg). Accessed 15 January 2022)

